

CHRISTIANITY and CRISIS

A Christian Journal of Opinion

Official Complacency and Nuclear Tests

In a recent letter to *The New York Times*, Professor Linus Pauling stated that the five years of nuclear bomb testing have released enough Carbon 14 to produce one million defective children.

It is not sufficient to answer that Prof. Pauling has belonged to some leftist organizations. Many scientists have been politically naïve in the past few years, but that gives us no reason to suppose that a scientist of Prof. Pauling's standing would distort his scientific calculations in a field in which he is not naïve. On a similar issue, Prof. Pauling had the support of a group of more than 900 scientists.

Discussion in official circles regularly plays down the injurious effects of nuclear tests. It is regularly assumed by most opinion-forming agencies that the official scientists have the right of way in this matter and that the burden of proof should fall on their critics. Surely this is wrong: the burden of proof should fall on the optimistic scientists who, in this area of uncertain knowledge, continue to assume that the risks to the future of the race should be taken lightly.

The real issue may not have to do with the facts, that is, the facts about Carbon 14 which have been stated only a short time ago and the many other facts of the living which have been cited often. Rather, the real issue may be the tendency of the official scientists to speak in averages or percentages to disguise the human realities which are involved.

Professor Teller speaks of the average loss of several days of life for each individual but, since some individuals are more affected than others, this is a trick to disguise the realities. Often it is said that while fall-out will produce a number of deformed children in the future, these will be only a small percentage of all future children and, in

any case, we shall never know which these are because there will be many other children deformed for other reasons.

This type of argument indicates an extraordinary reversal of moral assumptions. To become insensitive to the injurious effects of what we do to a large number of people because it is a *relatively* small number is a great departure from everything that Christians have believed in the past.

The Communists, whose ruthlessness is the excuse for most of our actions, sacrifice living persons to a future political goal. We sacrifice future persons to a present political goal. In both cases, there is an officially induced insensitivity. Since we are Christians and Humanists, we disguise from ourselves the realities, and this is easy because the victims belong to the future. The American churches stand by and say almost nothing about this reversal of moral assumptions among us.

This journal has always been devoted to the kind of moral realism that seeks to avoid a single-track type of moral argument. There are many other considerations that policy makers have to take into account; many of these were summarized by Kenneth Thompson (May 12 issue). The protest here is not against our taking other considerations into account: it is against the successful efforts of the government to keep this consideration—concerning the genetic effects of nuclear tests—from being taken seriously.

Also, when we choose a course that is known to have injurious consequences for some people because that is the only way of preventing injurious consequences for yet other people, we need to be more sure of our calculations than now seems possible in this case. It is first argued that the future effects of the tests will be small compared to the

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future effects of a general nuclear war; and then it is asserted that the tests are important for the prevention of such a war.

But this second claim is becoming more problematic every day. If we were really sensitive to the future effects of the tests, we would try much harder to find an alternative set of policies to prevent the war. More important, the continuation of the nuclear armament race is almost certain to provoke the feared general war as the element of accidents becomes more dangerous and as nuclear power increases. There are questions of timing on which equally sensitive persons may differ in the present situation, but as we shape policy for the immediate future the realities about the human effects of the continuation should be allowed to have their full effect on the conscience of the nation.

J. C. B.

CHRISTIAN CONCERNS IN AFRICAN POLITICS

THE GREAT MASS of humble people in Africa require deliverance from the grievous bonds of poverty, disease and ignorance; liberation from control by those whose first aim is not the well-being and development of that great mass; entry into responsible community life with concomitant growth of African personalities and African participation in the culture and relations of the entire world. Christians want this freedom and advance to be achieved with a minimum of violence, with fair consideration of minorities and without aggravation of global strains. A large order when one looks at actualities in Africa.

In the Mediterranean reaches the needs of plain folk tend to be obscured by the crises of Egyptian-Arab politics and the convulsive shaking of French power in Algeria. Both of these problems extend beyond Africa and the scope of this discussion. For Africa they represent costly phases in the liquidation of European intrusions, intermingling gains and losses on a balance sheet which our own time cannot yet draw up, but which seems likely to be written in languages other than French and English.

The major field of Christian concern lies below the Sahara. One way for Christians outside Africa to approach both the persons and the issues we would understand is to ponder what Christian citizenship requires of thoughtful and conscientious Africans in a few type-situations.

In Liberia, Ghana and Nigeria, each with its peculiar problems, African officials control public life. They are affected by African society, but also by an education largely non-African and by example or experience of non-African processes of government. Without differing in principle from the demands of human societies elsewhere, these situations call sharply for men who can rise above the self-interest and confining solidarity of clan and tribe to care with integrity and intelligence for the good of the nation and its neighbors.

Citizenship requires acceptance of duty in new forms, broadened out from the customary obligations of family and village, to the responsibilities, legal and financial, party and electoral, of the territorial state. Can citizen and official transform African life into modern terms with more of the virtues than of the vices in the two ways of life they are blending?

The faults of colonial rule and the Liberian tradition loom large. However, some Africans are now showing that they are not behind others in ability to misuse modern engineering and the mechanisms of modern man. Confused choices of good and evil crowd every office, and it is not yet clear whether the three states of West Africa have proved their political and economic viability, or have shown a sound relationship of government and people.

For the politically less advanced territories under British, French and Belgian rule, opportunities for constructive, responsible African citizenship are relatively narrower, and the temptations to remain self-centered and passive or negative are relatively greater. For control is in the hands of outsiders who have their own peculiar magic and who can be blamed for the lacks and misfortunes of the Africans.

The moral choices are hard to make. Should the African patriot work within the official system as a reformist, or outside it as an agitator or revolutionary? Should an African promote the educational system as an invaluable aid to the advancement of his people, or hate it as the alien destroyer of African culture and the purveyor of the knowledge and attitudes which Europeans want Africans to have?

Late in the day when threatened by African nationalisms, some of the Europeans preach the advantages of partnership and integration. But have they given any substantial demonstration of part-

nership in terms of equality and friendship? Nevertheless, this group of territories offers opportunity and hope, however inadequate and long deferred.

In the Union of South Africa, in the Portuguese territories and, tentatively, in the Rhodesias and in Kenya, the non-African factor, often in the person of resident Europeans, dominates and restricts to such a degree that citizenship hardly exists for the African. How can he respect or cooperate with a state that, by definition and in essence, throws its alien coercion *against* his people and their interests and *for* the prower and profit of Afrikaaner, Portuguese and British colonial?

The forms and terms may shift, the degree of oppression and exploitation may vary, the moods differ, but in every one of these regimes the life-pattern of Africans is determined by others who scarcely know where the shoe pinches on the common man and who display the intent to maintain indefinitely, even to consolidate, their control. Benefits they may confer upon Africans, but it will be when and as the ruling group deems expedient.

Afrikaaners are moving forward on a program that will, more harshly than ever, confine the African majority to places and types of life that will both reinforce and justify the Afrikaaner minority's claim to perpetual superiority in productive land and mines, in economic skills, in standard of living, in education and culture and in all means of compulsion. This system of domination and exploitation of African labor is given pseudo-sanctification as the preservation of "Christian civilization."

Nearly half the Africans in the Union are Christians. Can they see any wholesome relationship between the duty of a Christian and the police state

which holds them down, between biblical righteousness and existing law? Surely there must be many who eagerly envision the Moses that slugged the Egyptian taskmaster, the Moses who led his people to freedom and the Promised Land; many who put aside, swiftly or distressfully, the Pauline admonitions of dutiful obedience to present civil authority. Deprived of the shadow of a whisper in the state, what can the African do to develop his people and to remedy their condition? The demand for love and peace may commend subjection and acquiescence but communism offers incitements and promises more attractive to many.

In the Portuguese territories there is less of the inhuman color bar than in the Union, but fewer resources and a more primitive labor system. In many districts the state puts women and children to work on the roads for a good part of the year without pay or food; and a great fraction of the men pass, by necessity and under official suasion, into "voluntary" labor that means long absence from home with meager maintenance and a merely nominal cash payment at the end. A tiny handful of Africans can become Portuguese, but in no other way can they approach the status even of passive citizens under a melancholy state.

Once again, the system of domination by non-Africans is decorated as the expansion of "Christian civilization," overcoming and replacing "barbarism." Can Christianity have anything but a negative meaning for responsible and concerned Africans in such situations?

Our discussion is hazardously brief. But we believe it is important for Christians to look at Africa in the focus of citizenship.

M. S. B.

Communist Rule in Kerala: An Evaluation

M. M. THOMAS

THE COMMUNISTS came to power in Kerala state on April 5, 1957. They recently celebrated the first anniversary of their rule with much fanfare. Obviously there are differing estimates of the work of the government, and perhaps a year is too short a period to assess. Nevertheless, it seems necessary to make such an evaluation at this time.

What is the political climate today in this state which has the greatest density of population in

India as well as the highest literacy rate? We must look first into the political background of Kerala and recognize its peculiar problems as a state.

Because of the population density, the pressure on the land is very great and the food supply is deficient. Other problems are unemployment among the educated and the slow progress of industrialization. These problems are very much like those of certain other parts of India, but the significant difference is that the Keralans are conscious of them. This consciousness introduces a unique dimension into the political situation.

Mr. Thomas, a contributing editor, is a member of the Committee for Literature and Social Concern in India.

Political Background

After the formation of Kerala from the princely states of Travancore and Chochin, the Indian National Congress Party led the political evolution to self-government in the new state. However, no single party had a majority in the Travancore-Chochin Assembly after the first general elections. The Praja Socialists, although third in strength, formed the ministry with the legislative support of the Congress Party. When the Congress Party withdrew its support, this ministry had to resign. The Congress Party then came to power in coalition with the small South Travancore Congress Party, but factional rivalries led to the ministry's downfall.

Then Travancore-Chochin came directly under the President of India who governed through an adviser's regime. Throughout these changes, the people were becoming more cynical about the two democratic parties, the Congress and the Socialist. Serious charges of ministerial corruption were never explained satisfactorily, and the inefficiency of the government in effecting reforms and developmental schemes added to the popular unrest. There was a growing desire to "try the Communists" to see if they could provide a stable and uncorrupt government. It was hoped that a more efficient administration would result under the leadership of a more radical and better disciplined party like the Communists. Thus a shift took place among the more uncommitted middle class voters.

The three-cornered fights between the parties also helped the Communists to victory in predominantly non-Communist constituencies. Also in the Communists favor was the state reorganization scheme implemented in 1956. Under this plan, the Tamil-speaking part of Travancore-Chochin was transferred to Madras State and the Malabar area (traditional stronghold of the Communists) was integrated with Travancore-Chochin to form the new Kerala state.

In the 1957 elections, the Communists secured 60 of the 126 seats in the State Assembly, polling 37 per cent of the total vote. Five of the six Independents elected had received Communist support, and so the Communists came to power with a working majority.

Assessing the year's work, Kerala's Chief Minister, E. M. Sankaran Nampoothiripad, told the recent Amritsar Congress of the Communist Party that his people "generally felt the Communist-led government was the best they ever had" and was confident that the people would "sustain and strengthen the government." In a resolution, the

Congress asserted: "The record of the Kerala Ministry has brought new honor to the Party's banner" and called on all party units through the country to "mobilize popular opinion ever more firmly and actively in support of the policies and measures of the Ministry and to ensure the defeat of all reactionary attempts to dislodge it from power."

The Communists have used the anniversary celebrations as an occasion for much talk about the "national objectives" of the party. Sri Nampoothiripad, writing in a special number of *New Kerala*, claimed: "Our government's activities have effectively laid to rest the anti-Communist thesis that the assumption of office by the Communist Party would lead the nation to the loss of all that is good in our national traditions and moral values."

The people have discovered, he continued, that the Communist government is "as good or as bad as any other government." Further, he underlined the capacity of the party to realize the declared national objectives and, in that sense, the party's unique character. The Communist Party not only declares certain ideals, he said, it implements them. He cited as illustrations the proposed role of the police in class conflicts. The Communist Party, he asserted, is the same as other parties but "different in spirit."

The Communists want to counteract the feeling of the people that the Communist Party's coming to power will bring a crisis in the life of the nation and, at the same time, they want to show that they will be more effective than others in building the nation.

For these reasons the Kerala government has striven to maintain "correct" relations with the central government and wants to be approved as a normal state government. They have kept "strictly within the letter" of the Constitution with the exception, perhaps, of the Education Bill, the constitutionality of which has been questioned. Above all, the party in its revised constitution at Amritsar declared its intention to work for "full democracy and socialism by peaceful means."

Evaluation by the Intelligentsia

Have the Communists achieved what Sri Nampoothiripad claims they have achieved? Although it is very hard to know what "the people" generally think, it is certain that at least one group, the intelligentsia who are committed to the democratic social revolution, have weighed the one-year record of the Communists and found them wanting.

In their opinion, the year has: (1) brought to the forefront the forces in communism that threat-

en the fundamental conceptual basis of parliamentary democracy and has enhanced the democrats' sense of crisis; and (2) has shown that the Communists are in no way different from, if not worse than, other parties in their efficacy in executing the national plan and in preventing corruption.

These sentiments can be noted in the editorial comments of four-fifths of the dailies and periodicals. Asoka Mehta, a keen observer, expressed the feelings of many of the educated middle class when, after a tour of Kerala, he wrote a Socialist commentary entitled, *One More God Has Failed*.

This does not mean the Communists have done nothing which appealed to the people. On the contrary, they have gained favor by increasing the income of several lower classes of government employees, raising salaries and stabilizing the tenure of teachers in private schools, and by moving forward in the matter of agrarian reform. Although most of the agrarian reform measures are still in bill form, they will be a credit to the Communists if they are passed and implemented, and by this achievement the Communists may procure the support of several groups of people in different religious communities and social groups.

But questions may be raised concerning these achievements. The criticism that the party has doled out benefits to employees while risking the financial security of the state is not entirely without point. One must also note that the vaunted achievements of the ministry are really developments of inevitable trends initiated by previous governments and are noticeable throughout all India. They would have happened in Kerala in any case, although perhaps more slowly.

Threats to Democracy

However, the intelligentsia's new awareness of the Communists' threat to fundamental democratic ideas goes beyond these questions. It has been said that the rule of law is something peculiar to democracy and is the greatest bulwark mankind has discovered against tyranny. There are several points at which the government has expressed its rejection of this concept of law. I would mention only one, namely, the new role of the police.

In writing of the new police policy, Sri Nampoothiripad declares that the function of the state machinery "is not to help this or that class or coalition of classes, but to prevent their mutual relations from developing into open conflicts and acts of violence, and thus help the transition from one socio-economic system to another to be brought about in a peaceful way."

The implications of this policy for labor-capital relations are made clear as he continues: "Labor has to secure its demands through its own inherent strength and unity, helped by the solidarity of other sections of the toiling people as well as men and women of goodwill from every class... The non-intervention of the police on either side only facilitates the development and assertion of this unity and solidarity of the working people..."

But this "non-intervention on either side" does not mean that both sides will benefit equally from the new policy. The only illegality which the state machinery will recognize is violence to persons, and the police will be used only to protect persons. Laws of property relations will be left to the interplay of organized mass action and the property owners themselves. No doubt the government hopes the interplay will be peaceful, but this policy gives the more physically powerful the advantages. Since the organization of labor and the peasants is more powerful, changes in property relations will be to their advantage and will be effected without positive legislative action by the state. In neutralizing the machinery of the state, the government prevents it from protecting property rights which now exist by law. Clearly this policy *does* allow the use of police force to aid in the class struggle.

One may have a great deal of sympathy with the objective of the social change thus affected. But the means used does violence to the concept of law which demands that power, whether of the people or of the state, should be under the law and not above it; that in a civilized government, none should be allowed to take the law into their own hands; and that development should be orderly. The Kerala government's policy puts a premium on the exercise of arbitrary power by groups outside the legal order.

Sri Nampoothiripad recently stated that the law-and-order situation in Kerala was neither better nor worse than in other Indian states. Thanks to the law abiding nature of the people here, this is true. But the violence to the *concept* of law is most far-reaching.

As the implications of the new police policy become clear, organized mass action under Communist leadership begins to threaten security. Against this tide, groups which before depended on the state for protection of person and property will be forced to organize themselves for self-defense. This has already happened in the Niraham and Shertallay areas and on some plantations, and it has led to the complete breakdown of law and order.

There is a general sense of insecurity in all Kera-

la. Of course, the Communists are right in asserting that this feeling exists largely among the propertied classes, but as all the groups become more organized this will cease to be true. Already there have been several violent conflicts between Communists and non-Communist laborers. What is worse, there are indications that the spirit of lawlessness and violence is growing. It is significant that all the opposition parties have asked the government to maintain the democratic fabric of law or get out.

Partisanship and "Decentralization"

The second threat to democratic ideas which has become apparent this year is the narrow partisanship in the Communist Party that is incapable of distinguishing between the interests of the party and those of the country. This questionable equation of interests allows the government to exploit, with good conscience, every situation for the enhancing of the party's power and position. This procedural logic is inherent in the Marx-Leninist understanding of the Communist Party as the only party of the working class and the only party which can bring about social redemption.

The Communists have doubtless tried to adjust themselves to the democratic framework within which they are forced to work in Kerala. Nevertheless partisanship has found expression in the new forms of misusing the state machinery to strengthen the party's hold on the people and to build up its finances and organization.

It had been hoped that this government would be above corruption at least. In other regimes, individual ministers were charged with bribery, favoritism and nepotism. There are similar charges against some of the present ministers, and a few of them are true. But I am convinced they are not serious.

Today, however, a new form of corruption has appeared: corruption for the sake of the party. A Communist sympathizer justified the current practices and asked: "Do you think that the ministers should have forgotten their comrades—as the Congress Party ministers did when they came to power?" There is a point here, but to my way of thinking, it has been overdone.

The new labor contract cooperatives and a whole crop of new offices, jobs and committees have been used to provide position, power and money for the Communists. More serious, however, is the way in which party men and units have interfered in the work of the civil police and legal officers. I have tried my best to see these cases as stray incidents due to the actions of undisciplined members of the party. But even if such a generous interpretation should prove to be true, there are still too many such cases to be dismissed lightly.

A third threat is the Communist attempt to bring the cultural organizations of the land under state control. The Kerala Education bill, if approved, will leave very little room for private initiative and experiment in education [See Jan. 20 issue]. The issue is one of state control of education, not just

the protection of Christian interests in education. By the new University Act, even the university college has been made a government college with the professors now servants of the government and, as such, having little freedom for critical evaluation of government policies. One teacher has been questioned already for public criticism of some government policy. Of course, the university, as such, has some measure of autonomy, but it is hardly more than an examining body now.

The hollowness of the Communists' talk of "democratic decentralization" has been revealed in the government's attempt to bring the library movement under control and to change its voluntary character. No movement in the country has had a better basis in local self-governing units than the library movement, and through all changes it has maintained its independence of government and political parties. The trend towards state control of cultural activities is perilous to cultural freedom, the only foundations on which democratic freedoms can be maintained.

Finally, the most unforgivable act of the Communists, as I personally see it, is their deliberate fanning of the fires of communal hatred. The Kerala Education Bill was used for propaganda purposes in other parts of the country, notably to incite the Hindu communalism of North India against Christianity and the Christian community. This was clearly a move to "divide the opposition."

One observer relates: "The government came out with an eight-year-old police report of the Sabarimala Temple burning inquiry wherein vandalism by some Christians is alleged. This report was published at a time when several lakhs of Hindu pilgrims were on their way to the holy shrine of Sabarimala." Thanks to the silly basis of the report, however, and to the decision of the opposition not to be divided on the issue, the Communists failed to ignite the fire they desired. But who can judge the long term effects of such propaganda?

I have no desire to criticize the government for not fulfilling its starry-eyed promises of the Election Manifesto. The promises were written when the Communists, as the opposition party, had no hope of coming to power. Therefore, if after gaining control of the government and holding power, they are now confessing their inability to do several of those things, it only means they are becoming more responsible.

Industrialization of the state, liquidation of unemployment, a 25 per cent wage increase in industry, and self-sufficiency in food production are projects not easily accomplished. They are all major parts of several national plans. But the point to be raised is that the Communist government has been even less efficient than previous ministries in executing the development schemes. They executed only 35 per cent of the Second Five Year Plan in Kerala, as opposed to the Congress Party's achievement (83 per cent of their allotment of the First Five Year Plan) and the Governor's rule (55 per cent of the Second Plan).

Administration has never been more top-heavy

than at the present time. Even the budget, which was to have ended with a surplus, now has a deficit because of the inability of the government to procure several budgeted revenues. This happened in spite of unexpected income from the central government.

Such inefficiency could be held excusable considering the Communists' administrative inexperience. But the inefficiency should be admitted. Instead, the Communists continue to claim greater efficiency than other parties in implementing national objectives. When failures are admitted, they have an amazing habit of finding scapegoats, such as the "inefficiency of the administrative system," the "non-cooperation of the opposition parties," or "the fetters of the Constitution."

Of the Future

The most obvious question in considering the future is: What is the possibility of the Kerala Communists accepting the idea of parliamentary democracy? It is not impossible that the Communists' experience in government within a strong democratic framework may make an impact on their thinking. Unfortunately, they have thus far only reiterated their adherence to Marxism-Leninism—clearly a totalitarian ideology of the state.

I am not saying that the revelations of the Twentieth Party Congress of the Soviet Union did not lead to self-questioning on the part of the Indian Communists. Perhaps the new constitution of the party, adopted at Amritsar, is a step in the democratic direction. It not only accepts peaceful means but also states that the Communist aim is to build a state in India in which there will be "right of political organization for all including those in opposition to the government."

But the following proviso, "so long as they abide by the Constitution of the country," though formally correct, has many concealed dangers. It does not say that the party will maintain in the country's constitution the fundamental law and the independence of the judiciary vested with the duty of safeguarding the law. In fact, the notorious Stalin Constitution had all fundamental rights of the human person clearly declared but did not provide the machinery to safeguard the rights, nor for the recognition of any other party as a political organ of the people.

The Chinese Communists give freedom to other parties but only so long as the others accept the leadership of the Communists. One doubts whether the Indian Communist vision goes further than this. Certainly it is not the democratic right of political opposition as we understand it.

The direction of the change of thinking at Amritsar was welcomed by Pandit Nehru and other national leaders. The change shows that the climate of Indian political thought is still democratic and that it can influence even adherents of totalitarian ideologies to a limited extent. Nehru said in Trivandrum recently that if the Communists "think more of India and in Indian terms," they

will "cease to be a Communist Party in the international lingo." However, the Congress Party's general secretary has asserted that if the Communists are sincere in their new democratic professions they must "disband the party."

The answer to our initial question, then, must be that so long as the Indian Communists swear by Marx-Leninism and the international communism, any serious conversion to democracy is impossible. The question now becomes: What is the possibility of ousting the Communists from power in Kerala and preventing them from coming to power in other states?

During the course of the year, the Communist majority in the legislature on several voting issues has been reduced to one. This balance may be tilted in one direction or the other in the forthcoming Devikulam bye-election. The Communists are confident that they will retain the seat, but the major opposition parties are united in their fight for the election.

However, in the long run, the prospect for democracy in Kerala depends on the revitalization of the democratic Congress and Socialist parties. Is it happening? This is, in part, an all-India question, but I shall confine myself here to the situation in Kerala.

As noted above, there are signs among the intelligentsia of a new understanding of the nature of democracy and communism. About the mood of the people of Kerala, Asoka Mehta has said: "The people are evincing great interest in politics. Audiences, not only large but eager and patient, flock to meetings. There is not much cheering and no heckling whatsoever. Their anxiety to understand, their gratitude when an informative and analytical speech is made, are too clear to be missed. I believe the people of Kerala are engaged in intensive political retrospection. In the oyster of their brooding, a new pearl of decision is being shaped." One hopes so.

CORRESPONDENCE

A Reply From Dean Fitch

TO THE EDITORS: The issue between Dr. Loomis and myself (May 12 issue) comes to a head in his paragraph on Faust, who is referred to as the "poor doctor." Dr. Loomis believes that Faust suffered from an unaccepted self. I believe, on the contrary, that the trouble with Faust, as with his creator, Goethe, was that he suffered from an over-accepted self. On the ethical level both selves were over-accepted and under-challenged. They were over-accepted by themselves and over-accepted by society.

Of course it is absurd to talk about contrition and forgiveness in this context, because it never enters Faust's head that he needs to be forgiven for anything. So total is this type of egotism that it is insensitive to injuries it inflicts on others and unaware of the requirements of any moral law. To

tell such a self that it needs an improved self-acceptance is, indeed, to fee the foul disease.

In my opinion the following questions still need clarification: (1) What are the criteria by which the psychiatrist knows that the client is accepting rather than rejecting his self? (2) How do we know that the self being accepted is the client's "true self" rather than a self imposed by the cultural context or by the therapist? (3) How do we manage to place self-acceptance first in a context in which repentance, or self-rejection, has always been first? (4) What is the relationship between self-acceptance and the injunction to be born again, i.e., to go and get a new self? (5) In our prosperous American culture, are we suffering from an excess of unaccepted selves, or from a superfluity of pampered, over-accepted selves?

ROBERT E. FITCH

Not That Simple

TO THE EDITORS: The issues between religion and psychiatry are not clarified by the articles of Dean Fitch and Dr. Loomis.

In castigating the psychiatric view of the "self," Mr. Fitch claims to begin where Reinhold Niebuhr

leaves off. He attacks the philosophy of the psychotherapists but fails to give fair acknowledgement (in marked contrast to Niebuhr) to the authentic help that they are able often to extend in the clinical situation.

"It is inexcusable," says Mr. Fitch, "for the Christian shepherd to meddle with such devices" (i.e., those of the psychotherapists) "for everything in this secular teaching is in flat contradiction to the insights of the Christian faith." Some emotionally disturbed sheep might find that this kind of preaching failed to speak to their condition. It may be good Billy Graham, but even a sophisticated version of Billy is too simple an explication of the Christian view.

Dr. Loomis, on the other hand, sees no real conflict between the Christian view and psychiatric theory. His attempts to synthesize these two views of the self results in an incredible patchwork—one in which, however, the psychiatric pattern is clearly dominant. Where the issue is joined and the chips are down, he speaks as a psychiatrist. "The two functions," says Dr. Loomis, "reality testing and integration, are what keep us humble." Furthermore, "it is as simple as this: we become selves in the context of *givens* and *gifts*. The givens are genic and genetic—that is, they come through the protoplasmic parenting of our soma and the social, psychological parenting of our emotional milieu."

I can't believe it's this simple.

R. A. LANDOR
Berkeley, Calif.

In Our Next Issue

ARTHUR J. MOORE writes about the recent conference on "Religion in Free Society," held under the auspices of the Fund for the Republic.

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